

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of managing occupants of a physical area during an emergency event, the method comprising:

identifying the emergency event; and

activating a response plan based on the identified emergency event, wherein the activating step includes:

initiating at least one response operation for the response plan;

selecting an occupant of the physical area based on a location of the emergency event; and

providing instructions to the occupant based on the emergency event.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising defining the response plan.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the activating step further includes:

obtaining a response from the occupant; and

initiating at least one additional response operation based on the response.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

defining a hierarchical representation for the physical area; and

associating the occupant with at least one area node in the hierarchical representation, wherein the occupant is selected based on the emergency event and the at least one associated area node.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the defining step comprises:
 - obtaining user information for a user;
 - obtaining location information for a location for the user; and
 - associating the user information with an area node that corresponds to the location information.
6. The method of claim 5, wherein the defining step further comprises:
 - comparing the location information with at least one existing area node; and
 - creating a new area node when the at least one existing area node does not match the location information.
7. The method of claim 4, further comprising generating a schedule for the at least one area node in the hierarchical representation, wherein the occupant is associated with the at least one area node based on the schedule.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein the response operation includes obtaining at least one of location information and status information for the occupant.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein the response operation further includes obtaining at least one of user information and status information for at least one additional occupant located with the occupant.

10. A system for evacuating an occupant of a physical area during an emergency event, the system comprising:

means for identifying the emergency event;

means for automatically informing the occupant of the emergency event;

means for obtaining a location of the occupant;

means for obtaining an evacuation status of the occupant; and

means for providing instructions to the occupant based on at least one of the emergency event, the location, and the evacuation status.

11. The system of claim 10, further comprising means for communicating between the occupant and a responder.

12. The system of claim 10, further comprising means for providing instructions to a responder based on at least one of the emergency event, the location, and the evacuation status of the occupant.

13. The system of claim 10, further comprising:

means for defining a response plan for the emergency event; and

means for automatically activating the response plan based on the identified emergency event.

14. The system 13, further comprising:

means for initiating a first response operation for the response plan;

means for obtaining a result of the first response operation; and

means for initiating a second response operation for the response plan based on the result.

15. The system 13, further comprising:

means for obtaining additional data on the emergency event; and

means for adjusting the response plan based on the additional data.

16. A computer program product comprising a computer useable medium having computer readable program code embodied therein for responding to an emergency event, the program product comprising:

program code configured to identify the emergency event;

program code configured to activate a response plan based on the identified emergency event; and

program code configured to perform a response operation based on the response plan,

wherein the response operation includes:

program code configured to obtain a status and a location of an occupant; and

program code configured to provide instructions to the occupant.

17. The computer program product of claim 16, further comprising:

program code configured to define the emergency event;

program code configured to define the response plan; and

program code configured to associate the response plan with the emergency event.

18. The computer program product of claim 16, further comprising:

program code configured to obtain additional data on the emergency event; and

program code configured to adjust the response plan based on the additional data.

19. The computer program product of claim 16, wherein the response operation further includes:

program code configured to display the status to a first responder; and

program code configured to provide instructions to a second responder based on the status and the location.

20. The computer program product of claim 16, further comprising:

program code configured to define a hierarchical representation for a physical area, wherein the emergency event affects the physical area; and

program code configured to associate the occupant with at least one area node in the hierarchical representation.

21. The computer program product of claim 16, wherein the program code configured to provide instructions includes:

program code configured to determine a communications device for the occupant; and

program code configured to select one of a plurality of response instructions based on the communications device.